



Media release

Yorkshire Sculpture Park

November 2010

West Bretton
Wakefield
WF4 4LG
Open daily 10am-5pm
Admission free

For further press enquiries:
Eleanor Bryson, Press Officer / Vic Collins, Marketing Manager
t. 01924 832 642/633 t. 01924 832515
eleanor.bryson@yosp.co.uk victoria.collins@yosp.co.uk
press-marketing@yosp.co.uk

Yorkshire Sculpture Park launches ambitious new landscape restoration project

Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) is embarking on a major new development to restore and enhance areas of the Bretton Estate that have never been open to the public before with support from Wakefield Council and a £500,000 grant from Natural England.

In 2009, with the support of English Heritage and funding from Natural England, YSP commissioned the Landscape Agency to produce a Historic Landscape Management Plan to provide YSP with an understanding of the historic development of the 18th century-designed landscape and to set out a framework for the conservation and future management of the Estate. For the very first time, following recent changes in ownership of Bretton Hall, this Plan was able to encompass the whole 500 acre Bretton Estate which is now under YSP's management.

Following the recommendations in the Plan, Natural England are funding a £500,000 Historic Environment Special Project which will allow YSP to restore and enhance 85 acres of woodland nature reserve around two 65 acre designed lakes to restore water management infrastructure, historic footpaths, bridges, views, follies and incredible historical features including a Greek-style summer house, a now land-locked Boat House, an Obelisk, Stepping Stones and a magical Shell Grotto. The planned works, to include woodland management to open up historic vistas, will also allow the reconnection of the historic Grade II* listed Bretton Hall with the listed and designed landscape.

Margaret Nieke, Natural England's Historic Environment Adviser said *"Natural England are proud and delighted to be able to support this superb project. The work we are doing will not only open up new areas of the Park to visitors, but it will breathe new life into some wonderful historic features"*.

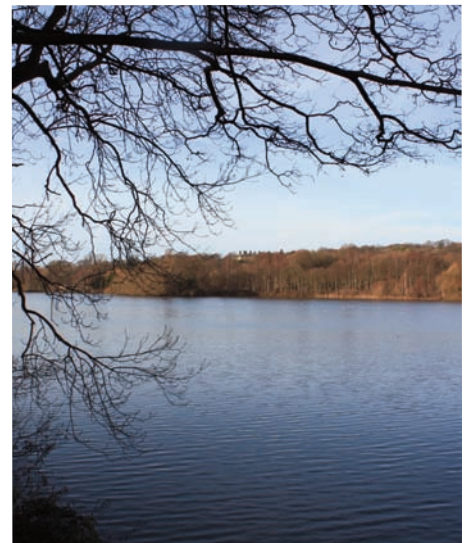
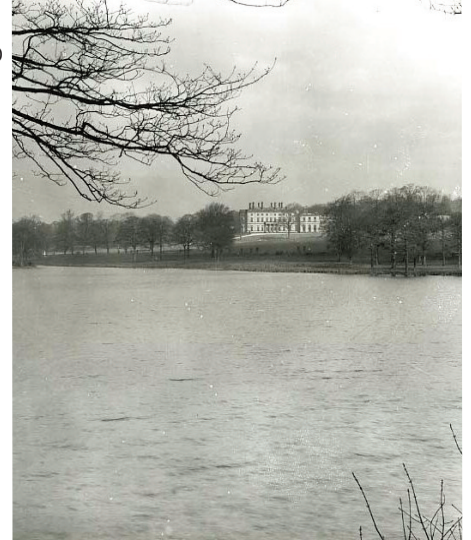
These works will help protect these special areas for future generations and allow visitors the chance to explore new areas whilst providing ambitious new opportunities for artist projects and the development of YSP's arts, ecology and nature learning, outreach and community programmes.

YSP Executive Director, Peter Murray CBE said *"We are very proud that in these difficult economic times, YSP has been able to secure significant support and commitment for this major project, which will reveal a whole new area of the Park for our visitors. We are extremely grateful to Natural England and Wakefield Council for their support. It is testament to YSP's success over the last 33 years that we are continuing to develop the Bretton Estate in order to create a unique centre for art, heritage, learning, space and landscape."*

'Great art for everyone' has been YSP's goal since opening to the public in 1977, enabling access, understanding and enjoyment of art and landscape for everyone, whilst dismantling many of the barriers that often exist between the public and contemporary art. This vision remains as strong as ever and the opening of a new area of the Park is central to this".

Cllr Peter Box, Leader of Wakefield Council and member of the YSP's Board of Trustees said *"We are delighted that Yorkshire Sculpture Park has secured funding for this exciting redevelopment which will enable them to restore and enhance the grounds for visitors. I'm very pleased that we are able to continue to support its pioneering work"*.

(Image captions. top to bottom: c1930 view of Bretton Hall, 2010 view of Bretton Hall, The Summer House, image © Jonty Wilde)



Patrick James, MD of the Landscape Agency, noted *"I am delighted that our Historic Landscape Management Plan and Natural England's generous grant will help to open up a large area of YSP that the public has not seen before. The project will also re-connect areas of this remarkable landscape for the first time in more than 70 years. It is hugely exciting and will bring a whole new dimension to YSP".*

Work is underway on site and the newly restored 150 acres will be opening to the public in the summer of 2011. Keep up to date with developments at www.ysp.co.uk

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Notes to editors

Yorkshire Sculpture Park, near Wakefield, is an independent art gallery, accredited museum and registered charity, number 1067908. YSP attracts on average 300,000 visitors each year, including 45,000 learning visits.

Wakefield Council and Bretton Hall

Wakefield Council acquired the Bretton Hall campus from the University of Leeds in 2006 to ensure that any development was not detrimental to Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

YSP has taken over the management of the estate grounds, nature reserve area and lakes to integrate them into the wider Park to allow for public access and benefit.

In 2009 English Heritage placed the Grade II historic landscape of Bretton Hall on their At Risk Register. In response to this, with support from English Heritage and funding from Natural England, YSP commissioned the production of the Historic Landscape Management Plan. The aim of this plan was to understand the current condition of the landscape and outline future management principles to enable improvements and ultimate removal from the At Risk Register.

Natural England

Natural England is the government's independent advisor on the natural environment. Established in 2006 its work is focused on enhancing England's wildlife and landscapes, and maximising the benefits they bring to the public.

Natural England is supporting YSP with a grant of £500,000 which has been used to develop a 10 year Landscape Management Plan and a Historic Environment Special Project. www.naturalengland.org.uk

The Landscape Agency

The Landscape Agency is one of the leading consultancies in the restoration, conservation and future development of historic landscapes in Britain. It was established a decade ago by Patrick James. The Landscape Agency has now unlocked more than £25million of grant funding for historic landscape projects during the past decade. Other grant aided projects include Hackfall, North Yorkshire and Strawberry Hill, Twickenham.

Other members of the Landscape Agency include Matthew Wilson, former Director of Harlow Carr, Harrogate, as well as lecturer and broadcaster. Matthew Wilson has recently finished work on the Royal Bank of Canada's Rain Garden at the Wildfowl and Westlands Trust's London Wetland Centre. Other existing clients include the National Trust, Royal Parks and several developers. www.landscapeagency.co.uk



(Images top to bottom: The hidden Shell Grotto, a land locked Boat House, an obelisk. All images © Jonty Wilde)